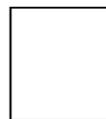




Return Service Requested



The CHALLENGE February 2017

South United Methodist Church
with Rev. John Marshall



"Where the joy of life in Christ overflows"

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship with Choir
Children's Story in the Sanctuary
Communion served monthly

10:45 a.m. Sunday School
For All Ages

11:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship with
Wildfire Worship Band in the Café
Communion served monthly

Contact Information:

Church office: (860) 647-9141
Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 9:00a-12:00p
Tues, Thurs 6:00p-9:00p
Email address: office@southumc.com
Web address: southumc.com

March Challenge Deadline:
Sunday, February 19, 2017



THE CHALLENGE FEBRUARY 2017

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- 9:30a - Traditional
Worship with Choir
and Children's Story
- 9:45a - Sunday School
for Nursery-Grade 2
- 10:45a - Sunday School
for all Ages
- 11:45a - Contemporary
Worship with Wildfire
Worship Band

A Lesson in Bold Humility

"...for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted." (Luke 18:14)

Dear Friends,

Not long ago I saw an account in the news that reminded me of the value of bold, humility. There is a young woman in western Connecticut who is battling an advanced form of cancer. As she struggled through the various treatments, she understandably became tired, discouraged and depressed. Her family and friends were concerned about her and wanted to do something to lift her spirits. They knew she is a huge fan of a major popular singer. They heard that this performer was coming to New York City for a concert, so they wrote her, telling about their friend. To their surprised delight, they received word back from the singer indicating that she would love to meet their friend. Moreover, she invited the sick woman and her friends to attend her New York concert as her personal guests. Thanks to the bold approach of her friends, this sick woman enjoyed the time of her life with her idol backstage at a concert in New York.

Persistence and humility, these are two virtues that Jesus taught are critical in how we approach God. By persistence I mean a degree of faith that is not put off by unresolved questions or even lingering doubts. To be persistent in our approach to God means to continue to seek Him even when we are not receiving the answer we want - even when life is difficult. I understand humility to be, "a low or modest estimate of one's own importance" particularly in comparison to someone else. Jesus told a story to illustrate his point. It was a tale of two very different men and their very different approaches to having a relationship with God. The first man was religious, likely a regular churchgoer. Obviously these are both commendable traits that would describe you and me. What Jesus did not commend about this first man was the level of confidence and self-satisfaction he derived from his religious practices. His poor attitude is summed up by the phrase, "I am not like other people." This man, a Pharisee as we find out, felt himself to be superior to others because of his spiritual practices. In essence he was saying to God, "You should hear me because I am better than other people and do more good than them." In reality he was trying to justify himself.

In contrast to the first man, Jesus told of a second, a tax collector. We are given the impression that this man was not much of a church attender or one who would consider himself to be religious at all. His attitude can be summed up in the sentence, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." The tax collector tip toed into the temple, keeping his distance from anything appearing holy. He knew at the core of his being that he was sinful, completely in need of the grace and mercy of God. He was humble enough to admit his deep need for God's mercy and bold enough to ask for it.

Jesus provides the take away lesson: this man, this tax collector, "went home justified." It was the second man who received and experienced God's favor and forgiveness. This is the message Jesus wants us to take to heart. God is far more willing to help us than any celebrity ever will be. All He asks is that we approach Him realistically: with humility, for He made us and everything else and yet with boldness for He dearly loves us, having sent His Son to die for us. **Do you believe that?**

In Humble, yet bold Service to Christ,
John

INSIDE THE FEBRUARY ISSUE

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February 2017 Worship Themes

February 2017: Worship Themes

February 5, 2017: “Persistence for What’s Right”

Scripture: Luke 18:1-8. The Persistent Widow.

Focus Verse: And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them?” (Luke 18:7)

Theme: The Lord rewards those who trust in him without giving up.

February 12, 2017: “A Tale of Two Egos”

Scripture: Luke 18:9-14. The parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Focus Verse: “I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.” (Luke 18:14)

Theme: God rewards those who come to Him in humility.

February 19, 2017

Pastor Dick Thompson will be leading worship at the 9:30am worship service.

Lin Daniels will be leading worship at the 11:45am Cafe worship service.

February 26, 2017: “Persistence Despite Resistance”

Scripture: Luke 18:35-43. Jesus heals a blind beggar.

Focus Verse: Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me.” (Luke 18:39)

Theme: Receiving God’s mercy often requires overcoming resistance.

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Email address: office@southumc.com

Web address: southumc.com

Facebook: [facebook.com/southumc](https://www.facebook.com/southumc)

Prayer Chain: (860) 337-2793 or
prayer@southumc.com

South Church Staff

Pastor - Rev. John Marshall ext. 14

Director of Music - Earle Bidwell ext. 11

Organist - Christopher Walton

Director of Ministries - Terry Marshall ext. 15

Director Next Gen Ministries - J.T. Himmelstein ext. 13

Sexton - Ken Schaller ext. 20

Sexton - Don Wilby ext. 20

Office Managers - Colleen Olbert/Patti LaForest ext. 10
Rev. Richard Thompson (retired)

S

Guided New Testament Tour is under way...

It is hard to believe but we are already at the start of the second month of the year. How are you doing in your Bible reading? If you have been following along with the readings from the Guided NT tour, that’s great! However, if not and you feel a need or a nudge to become more consistent, why not consider using the South Church New Testament readings? This month we will be looking at the Gospel of Mark, a wonderfully succinct and action-packed account of the life of Jesus. We will also be reading the book of Revelation, one that provides a glimpse of God’s glory and of His ultimate triumph over all that is wrong and evil in our world. You will find a list of this month’s readings below, in the bulletin and at southumc.com (click on the devos tab). On the two Thursdays of the month, from 6:30-7:30pm in *The Café*, Pastor John will lead a session previewing the New Testament material to be read in the coming weeks. The next scheduled sessions will be held: February 9th and March 2nd

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M

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Readings 76-85: Mark

76	2/3/17	Mark 1
77	2/6/17	Mark 2-3
78	2/7/17	Mark 4-5
79	2/8/17	Mark 6
80	2/9/17	Mark 7-8
81	2/10/17	Mark 9
82	2/13/17	Mark 10-11
83	2/14/17	Mark 12-13
84	2/15/17	Mark 14
85	2/16/17	Mark 15-16

Session 9: Introduction to Revelation

N

Readings 86-95: Revelation

86	2/17/17	Revelation 1-3
87	2/20/17	Revelation 4-5
88	2/21/17	Revelation 6-7
89	2/22/17	Revelation 8-9
90	2/23/17	Revelation 10-11
91	2/24/17	Revelation 12-13
92	2/27/17	Revelation 14-15
93	2/28/17	Revelation 16-17
94	3/1/17	Revelation 18-19
95	3/2/17	Rev. 20-22

Session 10: 1, 2 Thess., 1,2 Tim., Titus, Philemon

E

W

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Readings 96-105: 1,2 Thessalonians 1,2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon

96	3/3/17	1 Thessalonians 1-2
97	3/6/17	1 Thessalonians 3-4
98	3/7/17	1 Thessalonians 5, 2 Thessalonians 1

MAKER FUN FACTORY

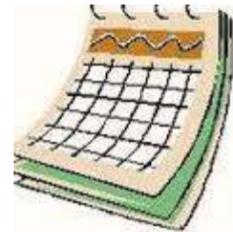
Please come and help
PAINT THE FLATS
for our Summer VBS

Monday, Feb 20
in Cooper Hall
6pm to 7:30pm

No artistic ability necessary
Anyone welcome!



Please check the Lost and Found box located in the Narthex. Any unclaimed items will be donated to charity.



Due to Pastor John's schedule the next New Testament Class will be 2-09-17
Not 2-16-17
as originally planned.



Cup of Joy ~ Women
Join us any Sunday
10:45am ~ Cooper Hall

Cup of Joe ~ Men
Join us any Sunday
10:45am ~ 3rd floor classroom



Social Justice Class
Join us any Sunday
10:45am ~ 3rd floor classroom

Upcoming Youth Events

The Winter Retreat is right around the corner! Please be sure to send copies of health insurance cards and the second deposit (\$50) into JT or the office.

- 2/5 Super Bowl Potluck at 6pm
- 2/10 Youth Retreat ~ return 2/12
- 2/19 NO Youth Group
- 2/26 Youth Group @5pm



Have you ever wondered how our organ actually works? Chris Walton will be giving "Tours of the Organ" on Sunday, Feb 12 after the 9:30 service. See Chris if you would like to attend.



Thank you very much for all your contributions to Washington School. Since September, we have contributed 188 pairs of mittens/gloves, 174 hats and 112 pairs of sweat pants.
*We are done collecting for now.

South United Methodist Church Presents:

Harold Lloyd

In the romantic comedy

Girl Shy



Clark Wilson performs on the Austin Organ

**Friday, February 24th
7:00 PM**

**1226 Main Street
Manchester CT**

**Adults \$10
Children \$5**



SUMC will once again be hosting a Community-wide Prayer Meeting

**Sunday, March 5
at 6:00pm**

in The Cafe with the Wildfire Worship Band
Please come and help lift our community in prayer with Christians from other Manchester Churches.

Services are held on the 1st Sunday of each month and the location varies from Church to Church. See Pastor John or Terry for more details

February 2017 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 10:00am All Church mtg. followed By lunch 11:45am NO Contemporary in Café 4:00pm Youth Group/Laser Quest	30 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm Young Women's Studies	31 12pm Bulletin Deadline	1 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	2 6:30pm New Testament Class 7:30pm SM Supervision	3	4 7:30am Men's Fellowship 9:30am Knitting Group
5 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am K- 2nd Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 6:00pm Potluck Super Bowl Party	6 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm Young Women's Studies	7 12pm Bulletin Deadline 7:00pm Committees & Commissions	8 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	9 6:30pm New Testament Class 7:30pm Stephen Leaders Mtg	10 11 Youth Winter Retreat	
12 Youth Winter Retreat 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am K- 2nd Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm NO Youth Group	13 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm Young Women's Studies	14 12pm Bulletin Deadline 7:30pm Ad Board	15 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	16 7:30pm SM Supervision	17	18 9:30am Knitting Group
19 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am K- 2nd Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm NO Youth Group **Challenge deadline	20 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm NO Young Women's Studies	21 12pm Bulletin Deadline 7:30pm NO Staff Parish	22 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm Wildfire 6:30pm Wesley Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Choir	23	24	25
26 9:30am Traditional Service w/Children's Story 9:45am K- 2nd Children's Church 10:45am Sunday School 11:45am Contemporary in Café 5:00pm Youth Group	27 6:30pm NO Young Men 6:30pm NO Young Women's Studies	28 12pm Bulletin Deadline 7:30pm Staff Parish Mtg	1 11:00am Staff Mtg 6:30pm NO Wildfire 6:30pm NO Wesley Ringers 7:30pm NO Chancel Choir 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service	2 6:30pm New Testament Class 7:30pm SM Supervision	3	4 7:30am Men's Fellowship 9:30am Knitting Group

More South News

DOING JUSTICE

The Social Justice Class has invited anyone interested to come and discuss our published definition of "doing justice" (see January Challenge). You are invited to come any Sunday in February. Just come to the classroom on the second floor; they'll be excited to talk with you.

PREPARING TO STOP HUNGER

Each spring, approximately sixty members of our congregation gather together and pack bag after bag of lunches for school kids in an impoverished part of the world. We have a great time. All the teacher has to do is add a little water and cook the combination of rice and soy and flavoring and vitamins.

Before that, however, we need to collect at least \$2900 to pay for the ingredients and for shipping (that's to make sure it's worth the commitment of their truck and driver). If we get more than \$2900, we get to pack and send even more food.

The Outreach Committee set aside three Sundays during January to collect financial contributions and send them on to Stop Hunger Now, but we feel we could still do more. Please help us to meet our goal. Checks can be sent to the church office or you can text your gift to 860-512-7185, use key word \$ amount STOPHUNGER.



REBUILDING TOGETHER is looking for volunteers for its 2017 program. The mission of this community based volunteer program is to bring volunteers and communities together to ensure that our neighbors are living in warmth, safety and independence. Last year 700 volunteers came together & their donations of time, talent, materials and money assisted 66 families. This year's

rebuilding day will take place on SATURDAY, APRIL 29. Look for the display in Reception Hall where you can sign up beginning February 19 through March 12. You will also need to fill out a waiver form which you will find next to the sign up sheet.

Please consider joining our SUMC team and this National non-profit organization celebrating its 25 years of service. You can help by choosing to paint or participating in yard work. Everyone is invited to attend the Town barbecue that follows the event & is given a free tee-shirt, but those gifts cannot compare to the rewards of giving back to your community and the gift of your time. Just ask those who have volunteered year after year!

As one grateful recipient wrote: "To us Rebuilding Together is an impressive display of community spirit to see so many people helping a neighbor whom they don't know..." Won't you please join us on April 29 to enrich the lives of others less fortunate than ourselves by helping them to live in a safe and healthy home. You'll be so glad that you did.

Outreach Commission

Outreach News

South Church is Reaching out Through:

MITTEN TREE.

South has contributed 188 pairs of mittens and glove to Washington School since September. Thank you for your generosity.

BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAM

The Social Justice Class invited Peter Tullson to talk with us about what his group is doing in Manchester with the parents of young children at risk. We thank everyone who came to learn about their program.

SUPPORTING STOP HUNGER NOW

We need to collect at least \$2900. Our first effort was on the Sunday of the snow storm and unfinished floors, and we did very poorly. The following Sunday we collected over \$1000. That's a good start, but obviously we can use more help. Sign-up sheets are also out for the packaging event on April 1.

REBUILDING TOGETHER

It's hard to believe we are already looking forward to working on someone's house and yard at the end of April. The Rebuilding Together committee needs to know how many people will be working that Saturday and what skills we have. So watch for more information on how to get involved.



South UMC

ASH Wednesday Service

March 1 at 7pm in The Sanctuary

Pastor John will bring an inspiring message and

The Chancel Choir will sing

As we embark on the Holy season of Lent for 2017,

Everyone is encouraged to attend

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent in the Western Christian calendar. Occurring 46 days before Easter, it is a moveable fast that can fall as early as February 4 and as late as March 10.

According to the canonical gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke; Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert, where he endured temptation by Satan. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of this 40-day liturgical period of prayer and fasting or abstinence. Of the 46 days until Easter, six are Sundays. As the Christian sabbath, Sundays are not included in the fasting period and are instead "feast" days during Lent.

Ash Wednesday derives its name from the practice of placing ashes on the foreheads of adherents as a celebration and reminder of human mortality, and as a sign of mourning and repentance to God. The ashes used are typically gathered from the burning of the palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday.

Although generally seen as a Catholic practice, as it was mostly abandoned by Protestants except for Anglicans after the Protestant Reformation, it has become increasingly common in much of Christianity, now being observed by many Lutherans and Methodists in addition to Catholics and Anglicans.

In an effort to keep us all up to date, The Trustees will occasionally publish reports. Below is Chairperson, Robin Meggers recent report

2016 Board of Trustees Report

During 2016 the following items were undertaken at the direction of the Board of Trustees:

1. Work has commenced at 21 Hartford Road to secure and preserve the premises. This work is being done so that there is no further deterioration in the structure.
2. Staging equipment was purchased to safely maintain the sanctuary primarily for changing light bulbs and cleaning.
3. The floors on the first floor and stairs have been updated and refinished by Above and Beyond.
4. The parsonage has been painted.
5. The concrete driveway/sidewalk in front of the church was replaced in the fall.
6. Landscaping was completed in various areas on the church property.
7. A retractable awning was installed on the parsonage porch.
8. Work has begun on the second floor classroom above the Pastor's office to refurbish it to accommodate adult meetings.
9. A storage Loft for seasonal ministries was completed.
10. Additional living space was completed on the 3rd floor of the Susannah Wesley House.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Murdock-Meggers,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees



Manchester, CT United Prayer 40 Days of prayer!

You are invited to come join forces with other area churches and pray for our community during lent!

Kick Off Event: Friday March 3, 2017 will be a "Half Night of Prayer" from 6:30pm to 9:30pm at the Salvation Army. It is an open house style event with times of worship and various interactive prayer experiences. Any and all are invited to attend some or all of the event.

My Offering To The Church



- I forgot my envelope.
- Just visiting at this church today.
- I am new here.
- Please provide me with envelopes.

Name _____ \$ _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ () Request a visit by the Pastor.

2017 Offering envelopes are in! You can pick up your envelopes in the back of the Sanctuary.



EASTER PLANTS \$8.50

Make check payable to SUMC Flower Fund and mail with this form to:
 Jeanne Eagleson, 172 Porter Street, Manchester, CT 06040
 Other options: drop off @ the church office or place envelope labeled "Plants" in offering
 ~ Ordering Deadline is March 31st ~

Please **PRINT** all information

In Loving Memory of: _____

In Loving Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Given by: _____

Address & Phone# _____

Will be left for a shut in _____ Will be taken _____ Envelope # _____